Instructional Activities, Strategies, and Models Supporting Vocabulary

Instructional Activities

- **Student-Friendly Explanations**

  A student-friendly explanation characterizes the word and how it is typically used and explains the meaning of the word in everyday language.

- **Word Associations**

  After the teacher explains the meanings of new vocabulary words, students are asked to associate one of their new vocabulary words with a word or phrase and to explain why they decided on that connection. Students are to look for a relationship and to explain their reasoning by considering and mentally manipulating it.

- **Have You Ever...?**

  "Have You Ever...?" asks students to associate newly learned words with contexts and activities from their own experiences.

- **Applause, Applause!**

  "Applause, Applause!" asks students to clap to indicate how much they would like to be described by the new vocabulary words (not at all, a little bit, a lot) and why they would feel that way.

- **Idea Completions**

  The Idea Completions activity provides students with sentence stems that require them to integrate a word's meaning into context in order to explain a situation.

- **Facets of Word Meanings (MS/HS)**

  The teacher uses the context of the story as a basis for discussing words. Students explore and elaborate on the meanings of new words by talking about their applications within the story. The discussion begins by discussing the big ideas or important concepts of the story. The teacher also develops discussion starters for each of the targeted words and engages the students in talk about them. Students support and elaborate their responses with ideas from the story. They make personal connections to and conceptual connections across text that further depends their understanding of the words meanings.

- **Generating Sentences (MS/HS)**

  Generating Sentences gives students practice using the targeted words as they create examples for the vocabulary logs.

- **Questions, Reasons, and Examples**

  Students interact with a new vocabulary word by responding to and explaining examples as well as creating their own examples. Questions, Reasons, and Examples asks the students what they could do with the word, why or why not,

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and determine from a set of choices which might be that word.

- **Making Choices**

  The teacher selects a new vocabulary word to work with, then creates a list of examples – each of which students have to decide if it is an example of the new vocabulary word. Students interact with a target word by responding to sets of words as either examples of the new vocabulary word or not by saying the new word. If it is not an example they say nothing.

- **Word Wizard**

  Classes gain points by bringing in evidence of hearing, seeing, or using new vocabulary words outside the classroom. Classes can earn points for reporting sightings of new words or for using them.

- **Post and Tally**

  The teacher writes the words from a passage on large poster board with space after each word. The teacher will put a tally mark after a word when a student uses the word during the day or notices that the teacher has used the word. At the end of the day, the teacher points out each word's score.

- **Relationships among Words (MS/HS)**

  Students are asked to consider how word meanings interact in order to respond to a forced association question.

Strategies

- **Structural Analysis**

  Structural analysis refers to the analysis of words by identifying prefixes, suffixes, root words, inflectional endings, contractions, word combinations forming compound words, and syllabication.

- **Constructing Visual Representations**

  Visual representations (graphic organizers) are tools to help students organize their understanding and recall of important ideas in the areas of vocabulary development and comprehension.

  A graphic organizer is a visual representation of knowledge, a way of structuring information, and of arranging essential aspects of an idea or topic into a pattern using labels (Bromley, Irwin-DeVitis, & Modlo, 1995). Flood and Lapp (1988) use the term 'mapping' generally to describe any illustrative material that helps children learn from texts. These materials could include charts, graphs, maps, flowcharts, or other structures that help one visualize the materials in texts (Egan, 1999).

- **Explicit Instruction**

  Explicit instruction provides teachers with a lesson structure for explaining and demonstrating the application of reading concepts, processes, skills, and strategies that are invisible to many students. It also provides a structure for coaching students to a high level of performance and cognitive control with these essential tools of proficient readers. Some students will have discovered these and become very proficient in their use. For other students, strategies such as using sight words and knowledge of how onsets and rimes work to

decode unfamiliar words ,or mining the full text as they gather information about the meaning of an unfamiliar word, will be new content. One of the major instructional purposes for using explicit instruction is to model and explain how reading works. Of course, our long term goal is for students to apply the targeted concept, process, skill, or strategy appropriately and automatically in real reading situations and to know how and why it works for them.

Models

- **Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM)**

  The picture word inductive model is an inquiry-oriented language arts strategy that employs photographs containing familiar objects, actions, and scenes to elicit words in children's listening and speaking vocabulary. This model helps students add words to their sight reading vocabulary, as well as their writing vocabulary, It also helps students discover phonetic and structural principles present in those words. This model includes both explicit instruction and concept formation lessons and is a multidimensional approach to literary development, one which encourages the use and integration of all actions and strategies emphasized in Every Child Reads. PWIM requires continuous modeling of reading and writing by the teacher and can also be used to teach students how to use observation and analysis in their study of reading and writing, as well as in comprehending and composing (Calhoun, 1999).

References

Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.

Calhoun, E.F. (1999). *Teaching beginning reading and writing with the Picture Word Inductive Model.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Egan, M. (1999, May). Reflections on effective use of graphic organizers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *42*(8), 641–645.

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